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THE BULLETIN

OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS

May 1995
Vol. 48 No. 9



University of Illinois
Graduate School of Library and Information Science

University of Illinois Press

★ "[An] endearing reminiscence."*



My Rotten Redheaded Olden Brother

PATRICIA POLACCO

★ "Featuring an obnoxious, freckle-faced, bespectacled boy and a comforting, tale-telling grandmother, this autobiographical story is as satisfying as a warm slice of apple pie."

— Starred, *School Library Journal**

★ "The text rings true with the authentic battling words of childhood spats. Breezy, zestfully hued artwork affords Polacco's characters . . . an almost irrepressible energy."

— Starred, *Publishers Weekly*

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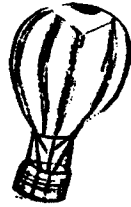
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T H E B U L L E T I N

OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS

May 1995
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EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED WITH REVIEWS

*	Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
R	Recommended.
Ad	Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material in the area.
M	Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.
NR	Not recommended.
SpC	Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collections.
SpR	A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended for the special few who will read it.

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THE BIG PICTURE

The Great Fire

by Jim Murphy

A peg leg wedged into the floorboards of a burning barn, a leather hat writhing in the heat, fireproof buildings gutted, beerhall carousers singing amid the blaze—the 1871 Chicago Fire has all the stuff a young pyrophile's dreams are made of. This account offers not only the luridly enticing details disaster junkies crave, but also a more complex analysis of the causes of the conflagration than is usually offered in children's history books, and an examination of evolving fire apocrypha that introduces young readers to some rudimentary historiography.

Murphy opens with a riveting portrait of a tinder town ready to ignite. Wooden buildings, roofed with tar, huddle together on small city lots. Commercial enterprises that run on volatile materials are interspersed throughout residential neighborhoods, and the city is girded with wooden sidewalks waiting to conduct flames through a "highly combustible knot." Add a lengthy spell of dry weather with high winds and the scene is set for disaster.

Why one particular barn fire in a season's worth of similar fires blazed out of control has been the subject of debate since the original inquest, and Murphy weighs the evidence as he describes events which, but for their consequences, could play as comedy. Human error undoubtedly contributes: no alarm bell sounds at the Courthouse; visual sightings are inaccurate and wagons are dispatched to the wrong street; one patrolman ignores a supervisor's signal order, while another turns in an inaccurate second alarm. Even nature conspires against containment as an updraft ignites a church spire, hurling embers across the river into another quadrant of the city.

But of course it's the human melodrama the audience expects, and as Murphy traces the fire's progress, he also deftly incorporates the testimonies of four eyewitnesses who observe the inferno from radically different vantage points. Joseph Chamberlin and Horace White, both newspapermen, initially savor their encounter with what is obviously a major news item. White describes a scene of orderly evacuation: "There was no panic, no frenzy, no boisterousness, but only the haste which the situation authorized." This is definitely not the experience of Claire Inness and Alexander Frear. Separated from her family by a panicking mob, twelve-year-old Claire is trapped in an alley and receives no aid from people in flight; Frear, attempting to move his in-laws to safety, encounters "a mob of men and women, all screaming and shouting . . . intercepting each other as if deranged."

Here Murphy makes an analytical leap at which children's authors often balk—he guides readers into considering circumstances and predispositions that influence the disparate accounts. Do Horace White's public statements reflect his role as civic booster? ("After all," Murphy points out, "a city that had gone wild would not instill much confidence in potential business investors.") Could a shift in the wind simply have bought White's neighborhood time to make an orderly retreat?

Chamberlin's testimony concerning two drunken boys and "wretched female[s] . . . rushing out almost naked" should be weighed against his known distaste for the inhabitants of the De Koven Street area. In the concluding chapter, "Myth and Reality," Murphy demonstrates how similar attitudes, among members of White's and Chamberlin's class, would direct public outrage against society's easiest targets—Mrs. O'Leary, portrayed as an old hag who burned the barn for the insurance money, and "a drunken Fire Department," unable to respond to an emergency, creating a legacy of urban myth that lingers today.

Carefully credited and captioned period photographs and engravings, collected by the author, mirror the range of experiences presented within the text: calm spectators view the blaze from the river bank; a child is trampled by a fleeing crowd; booster spirit emerges in a "Laborers Wanted" sign perched on the portico of the burnt-out Insurance Exchange. Each chapter concludes with an identical base map, shaded to indicate the current extent of the fire; the tiny area of the fire's origin is pindotted on each map—a chilling visual reminder of the fragile infrastructure, bungled communications, and plain rotten luck that condemned a city to ashes. (See imprint information on p. 318.)

Elizabeth Bush, Reviewer



NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

ADLER, DAVID A. *Child of the Warsaw Ghetto*; illus. by Karen Ritz. Holiday House, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8234-1160-5 \$15.95 R Gr. 3-5

With a broader canvas than *A Picture Book of Anne Frank* (BCCB 3/93) or *Hilde and Eli* (11/94), this author-illustrator team's latest Holocaust biography moves beyond the picture-book audience. The book focuses upon death-camp survivor Froim Baum, who grew up in the Warsaw Ghetto and was sent at age twelve by his widowed and impoverished mother to live at the fabled Janusz Korczak's orphanage. Because Froim was not wearing his Jewish armband at the time, he was not taken with Korczak and the other children to Treblinka; instead, Froim and his family paid smugglers to get them out of the Ghetto to a relative's house where they were captured some months later. In order to convey a wider picture of the Ghetto (and the uprising, which occurred after Froim escaped), Adler necessarily incorporates more straightforward historical information than in the previous books, making the book less suited to reading aloud but more useful for middle-grades research and independent reading. Appropriately, Ritz's charcoal-and-pastel illustrations (on somber gray pages) have a more sophisticated tone, and they are modeled on photographs (some well-known) but do not seem stiff. RS

ANHOLT, CATHERINE *What Makes Me Happy?*; written and illus. by Catherine and Laurence Anholt. Candlewick, 1995 26p
ISBN 1-56402-482-2 \$13.95 R 3-6 yrs

"What makes me laugh?" asks the little girl on the first page; the recto responds

with "tickly toes/ a big red nose/ being rude/ silly food/ acting crazy/ my friend Maisie." Next a little boy asks, "What makes me cry?" and offers similarly rhymed answers, and other children explore the causes of boredom, pride, jealousy, fear, and so on. The answers—sometimes verses, sometimes a pithy single reply—are tidy and clever, and the examples understandable (although there seems to be a moment of serious naïveté—one of the scary things mentioned is "gangs," here represented by jeering toddlers in costumes). The line-and-watercolor illustrations have a plenitude of delicate detail and a solidifying use of hatching and patterns, and the layout nicely balances the varied formats on the recto against the constant visual refrain of the question-posing verso. This is friendly without being sappy and honest with a light touch ("What makes me jealous?" ask the identical twins; "Her!" they respond, pointing to each other) on a sometimes difficult subject. Kids will recognize the emotions and the situations, and they may want to start listing responses of their own. DS

ARMSTRONG, JENNIFER *King Crow*; illus. by Eric Rohmann. Crown, 1995 32p
Library ed. ISBN 0-517-59635-0 \$15.99
Trade ed. ISBN 0-517-59634-2 \$15.00 R 6-10 yrs

Armstrong blends elements of folktales, mythology, and ancient Irish history into an original tale of two kings, one good and one evil. Cormac, beloved by his people, is forced to fight evil Bregant, and in the battle falls from his horse and loses his sight. The next day, wandering blind, he meets a crow wounded by an arrow; when the king kindly removes the arrow, the crow promises to return the favor, and he does so when Cormac is taken prisoner. Each morning the bird visits Cormac's cell and tells him what he has heard, allowing Cormac to fool his jailers into believing he has mysterious powers; the clever king also manages to take each report and turn it into a foreshadowing of Bregant's death. By the third day, Bregant is so shaken he visits the cell himself, and he ends up plunging "from the tower to the torch-lit courtyard below." Armstrong's story is solidly constructed and satisfying, though somewhat difficult to read aloud smoothly. Rohmann's paintings are the *Gone with the Wind* of picture-book illustrations, providing spectacle on a grand scale. He avoids the trap many lush books fall into of being stiff and dull: these pictures roar with movement and life, while Cormac himself remains the center of calm. The opening pages alone, showing the opposing armies with their different shields, flags, and strange musical instruments, will give observant children much to enjoy, and those favoring drama will not be disappointed. In his zest for breaking free of constraints, the artist may have used too many unconventional perspectives, and his choice of never showing Cormac and Bregant face to face seems odd, but overall, this is a rich combination of story and illustration with plenty to gratify action fans. SDL

BANKS, JACQUELINE TURNER *Egg-Drop Blues*. Houghton, 1995 [128p]
ISBN 0-395-70931-8 \$13.95
Reviewed from galleys Ad Gr. 4-6

Judge and his twin brother Jury, from *Project Wheels*, etc., are back, and Judge narrates the story of the discovery of his dyslexia, his struggle to pass sixth-grade science, and his and Jury's participation in the egg-drop contest in the science fair; while he's attempting to deal with all that, his divorced father announces he's remarrying. The plot threads aren't well-defined and characterization is some-

times a bit vague; it's not clear, for instance, why Jury is being such a pill for much of the book, or why there is repeated portentous mention of Jury's participation in forbidden football games (unless it's supposed to be a teaser for the next volume in the series). Judge, Jury, and their "posse" (group of school friends), however, are a likable multiracial bunch of kids, and the adults are warm and goodhearted without being bland or sappy. Kids will appreciate Judge's account of his battles with the exigencies of daily life, and fans of the first two books will want to tag along with the twins in their new outing. DS

BAT-AMI, MIRIAM *Dear Elijah*. Farrar, 1995 106p
ISBN 0-374-31755-0 \$14.00

Ad Gr. 4-7

When a heart attack lands Rebecca's father in the hospital, she pours out her thoughts in a series of letters to the prophet Elijah, who, the author notes at the beginning, is seen by some as an "ever-present wise man who wanders around in disguise and aids those in distress." In many of the letters, Rebecca reflects upon what it is like to be twelve years old and on her feelings about being Jewish and the coming Passover holiday. She speaks to Elijah with great familiarity: "E., you look positively wonderful. And you're riding your chariot . . . (It had a tune-up, by the way.)" The narrator's tone is kept informal, but she rarely sounds like a modern girl; despite the author's working into the text Rebecca's statement "I love old, outdated expressions," the protagonist's use of phrases such as "Mr. Big Cheese," a "quick-change artist," and calling her sister a "looker" sometimes makes her sound like a slangy sixty-year-old. The author also seems to be trying too hard to make Passover preparations sound thrilling: "When one of us found a *chometzdikeh* item, that person shouted, 'Found it!' You'd have thought we were playing *Jeopardy!*" or Bingo or *Wheel of Fortune*, and Vanna White was wheeling in the hot prizes." And after giving such a build-up, Bat-Ami makes an odd choice in removing her heroine from the scene on Passover, when, after her father is moved to intensive care, she runs from the house and sits writing a letter about what she imagines is happening at the seder. However, the author does create a vivid character in Rebecca, and she gives young readers some insight into the life of an Orthodox Jewish girl. A thorough glossary is included. SDL

BISCHHOFF-MIERSCH, ANDREA *Do You Know the Difference?*; written by Andrea and Michael Bischoff-Miersch; tr. by Rosemary Lanning; illus. by Christine Faltermayr. Neugebauer/North-South, 1995 26p
Library ed. ISBN 1-55858-372-6 \$14.88
Trade ed. ISBN 1-55858-371-8 \$14.95

R Gr. 2-4

Vivid illustrations and clear explanations dispel some common confusion in this picture-book-sized volume. On facing pages, two similar animals are compared, beginning with gorillas and chimpanzees. While highlighting the differences between the pairs, the text also gives brief background information and the occasional fun fact—for instance, that the ancient Egyptians mummified crocodiles. Some of the comparisons point out distinguishing characteristics of animals which are easily confused (alligators/crocodiles, jaguars/leopards, seals/sea lions) while others show animals with surprising differences or similarities (though hyenas and African wild dogs resemble each other, hyenas are more closely related to cats, while African wild dogs are in the dog family). Picture captions and line drawings in each border give additional, though sometimes repetitive, information; the line

drawings are disappointingly inconsistent, sometimes effectively contrasting animal parts, but often just throwing in an unrelated piece of information. Faltermayr's paintings, in a softened photorealistic style, work particularly well; she captures the imposing presence of the animals and plays up the features (such as the jaguar's stockier build) which differentiate them. With its pinpointing of animal physiques, this makes a fine choice for preparing children for zoo trips and for clearing up questions later. SDL

CANNON, JANELLE *Trupp: A Fuzzhead Tale*; written and illus. by Janell Cannon. Harcourt, 1995 48p

ISBN 0-15-200130-1 \$15.00

R 3-6 yrs

"Fuzzheads" look a bit like upright, human-sized Persian cats, so it stands to reason that Trupp, seized by a desire to see the world, must disguise himself for his adventure among people. With the help of a raven, Krok, Trupp denudes a scarecrow of its clothes, and he and Krok make their way to the big city and are taken under the wing of Bernice, a bag lady. From the creator of the popular *Stellaluna*, this is another striking production, and while the slender story is overwhelmed by the pictures, there's enough of it to keep the book off the coffee table. (As far as saintly bag-lady books go, this one is cozy but fairly unsentimental.) Fluffy white Trupp with his clear aqua eyes makes for a formidable if cuddly visual presence, and his delicate feline looks are given weight by his boyish posture and movements. Cannon places the characters against stylized backgrounds just this side of surreal (such as a picture of Trupp making his way through a steep sandstone canyon bisected by a slash of blue sky), but the perspective is close and focused tightly on the figures so that we don't lose the action to the scenery. RS

COLE, HENRY *Jack's Garden*; written and illus. by Henry Cole. Greenwillow, 1995 [25p]

ISBN 0-688-13501-3 \$15.00

Reviewed from galleys

Ad 3-7 yrs

This time, Jack plants a flower garden instead of building a house. In the middle of each double-page spread, we see Jack's garden with a border of related items; on the first, "This is the garden that Jack planted," Jack is standing on the bare dirt, holding a (labeled) shovel, while outside the frame are gardening tools, also labeled. The final version of the cumulative verse reads: "These are the birds that chased the insects that sipped nectar from the flowers that blossomed from the buds that formed on the plants that grew from the seedlings that sprouted with the rain that wet the seeds that fell on the soil that made up the garden that Jack planted," and along the way we have seen labeled seeds, insects, clouds, birds, and eggs. Unfortunately, one problem pervades the book: sizes of objects are disproportionate, beginning with the ladybird beetles (commonly known as ladybugs) on the cover that are as large as the pictured yellow warbler and continuing throughout. Jack plants an interesting variety of weeds, wildflowers, and conventional flowers, but Cole doesn't follow any of them all the way from seed to flower, and the final picture shows only a few of the plants. Cole's colored-pencil drawings will appeal to any nature lover, however, since he wisely adds enough wildlife to amuse children who would find plants alone boring, and his rhyme may even get some young fingers itching to garden. SDL

COOPER, MELROSE *I Got Community*; illus. by Dale Gottlieb. Holt, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8050-3179-0 \$14.95 M 5-8 yrs

The idea of this book—the celebration of various individuals' contributions to the community—may not be particularly original, but it's a goodhearted one, as a first-person narration praises the virtues of the young speaker's neighbor, babysitter, friend, librarian, and others who help, care for, and guide the narrator. Unfortunately, the well-meaning message can't compensate for an inadequate medium. The rhymed text may be labeled "vernacular" on the jacket flap, but this is nobody's demotic speech: "I got a sitter, helps me safe,/ Pulls on my gloves so my hands don't chafe,/ Ties up my hood when the wind acts furious,/ Answers my askin's when I get curious." The language throughout is similarly a blend of "vernacular" (represented by dropping the *g* off of participles and replacing them with apostrophes), the saccharine, and the syntactically confusing (the fireman is "heaven' a hose in booted feet"); the ideas in the couplets seem driven by the forced rhymes (as in the hand-chafing example above), and the scansion wobbles. It's also peculiar that one of the many narrators ends the book by suggesting that the community should "count on me!" when there's been nary a hint of reciprocity. Gottlieb's bright acrylic illustrations, showing a happy multicultural cast, are solid and cheerful but slighter and less imaginative than usual, with little variety in composition or perspective. This may warm the cockles of a few adult hearts, but it probably won't induce respect or appreciation for the community in kids who didn't have such feelings already. DS

CORMIER, ROBERT *In the Middle of the Night*. Delacorte, 1995 [256p]
ISBN 0-385-32158-9 \$15.95

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 7-10

In three narrative threads that twist into each other, a woman nurses her rage over a childhood accident that "killed" her many years ago, a man still wrestles with his guilt over that tragic event, and his son Denny finds himself drawn into the pain of them both. Lulu was thought dead after the balcony in the Globe Theater crashed to the ground (and killed twenty-two children), but, revived by doctors, she lived again to focus her revenge on the boy she thought responsible: John Paul, a teen-aged usher who had been sent up to the balcony to investigate strange noises and who inadvertently started a fire when he lit a match for light. Despite John Paul's official exoneration, Lulu has been tormenting him with phone calls and letters ever since, and Denny has grown up with the family rule that he must never answer the telephone. One day, though, as the twenty-fifth anniversary of the tragedy approaches, he cannot resist, and Lulu finds a new victim for her rage. Morally, this is less complicated than much of Cormier's work and in fact less complicated than the book seems to want to be: while Lulu, John Paul, and Denny each wrestle with demons, their struggles fail to parallel or meet on any plane more than the narrative. Lulu's fear of the death she got a glimpse of, Jean Paul's private atonement, Denny's fear of involvement with anything that might be trouble—each is compelling, but none have enough to do with one other. As far as storytelling goes, though, it's classic Cormier. Relatively speaking, however, it's *easy* Cormier, and kids who find themselves at a loss with the narrative intricacies of *After the First Death* or *Fade* should have no trouble following the plot and its suspenseful turns. RS

CRIMI, CAROLYN *Outside, Inside*; illus. by Linnea Asplind Riley. Simon, 1995 [34p]

ISBN 0-671-88688-6 \$15.00

Reviewed from galleys

R 3-7 yrs

An early morning thunderstorm blows up outside, but inside Molly wakes up, puts on her red flannel robe and her slippers, and spends a cozy time with her cat and her bird. For each event outside, there is a parallel inside: "Outside, the rain spills from the clouds, shushh-wissh, shushh-wissh, shushh-wissh. Inside, the clock ticks in the hall, tink-tunk, tink-tunk, tink-tunk." Once the storm winds down and the sun comes out, "Molly swings the door open . . . and lets the outside in!" The nicely rhythmic text evokes the pleasures of wild weather while one is safe inside, and many of the sounds are repeated within lines without actually rhyming. Riley's pictures carry through the echoing effect of the parallels in the text by using parallel shapes in the pictures. For instance, when a frog is shown outside, the syrup and butter on Molly's pancakes make the shape of a frog inside—in fact, frog shapes are repeated throughout. The painted-paper illustrations feature curves with lots of movement, solid shapes with speckled highlighting, and intense though never garish colors. The rabbit outside huddling against the tempest reflects a child's fear of storms, but Molly's calm acceptance of the weather helps make this a good choice for soothing the jitters. SDL

CUSHMAN, KAREN *The Midwife's Apprentice*. Clarion, 1995 [112p]

ISBN 0-395-69229-6 \$10.95

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 5-8

She starts out as Brat, aged twelve or thirteen; the midwife finds her hiding in a dungheap, christens her Beetle (short for dungbeetle), and takes her on as a slavey and gofer. As Beetle begins to grow in confidence and in knowledge, she names herself Alyce, and although she suffers setbacks (a crisis in confidence when attempting to deliver a baby on her own), she eventually realizes that midwifery is her destiny and becomes a full-fledged apprentice. As she did in *Catherine Called Birdy* (BCCB 6/94), Cushman blends earthy realism with a certain pastoral coziness in her picture of early England, which, added to an appealing heroine, make the story an absorbing tale of another time. Her depiction of inarticulate Alyce's gradual blossoming remains credible, never demanding too much of her heroine or her readers. The book's brevity and simplicity also commend it to older readers who find the era intriguing but are intimidated by more epic tales of medieval life. Cushman adds an historical note about midwifery, which includes mention of the maternal and child mortality that never appears in the story itself. This is an offbeat, well-crafted story; fans of the author's first book will enjoy it. DS

DEAN, JAN *Finders*. McElderry, 1995 [176p]

ISBN 0-689-50612-0 \$15.00

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 7-10

Helen is sixteen, and she's starting to question the sufficiency of her adopted family; her beloved grandfather's attempt to help by taking her away for a weekend goes wrong when the old man suddenly dies. Soon Helen realizes that, biological relative or not, her grandfather has passed on his psychic gift of "finding" to her, and she undertakes to find a missing artifact for a mysterious Mr. Morgan, who had originally been seeking her grandfather's help. It becomes apparent that Mr.

Morgan too has his powers and that Helen's gift will lead her into danger as well as knowledge. Dean has smoothly combined the family drama with the supernatural story (and thrown in an appealing boyfriend for Helen to boot, in the person of next-door-neighbor Col) with excellent results. The complex relationships in Helen's family, with her hostility and similarity to her demanding mother and her legacy of clairvoyance from her grandfather, are subtly depicted and imply that there's more to passing on familial characteristics than genetics. The spooky story of Mr. Morgan, a selkie who tries to lure Helen to her doom for knowing too much, is a tasty blend of ominous and appealing. Dean's depiction of Helen's fragmented awakening to her gift occasionally makes things a bit murky, but the easy dialogue and Helen's friendship with loyal Col keep this an accessible and appealing fantasy. DS

DEMUTH, PATRICIA BRENNAN *In Trouble with Teacher*; illus. by True Kelley. Dutton, 1995 [80p]

ISBN 0-525-45286-9 \$13.99

Reviewed from galleys

Ad Gr. 2-4

Montgomery's third-grade teacher, Mrs. Wix, seems much more demanding than nice Miss Pink from second grade, who never made him read aloud and gave easy spelling words. Montgomery is certain he is doomed to participate in what he terms the "Flunker's March," where children who miss too many of Mrs. Wix's overly tricky spelling words must go to the front of the classroom and speak privately to her. Sure enough, he flunks the test ("Any kid could tell them that elephant has an *f* in the middle, not a *p*!"), but discovers to his relief that, instead of yelling at him, Mrs. Wix offers a plan to help him improve his spelling and even compliments his storytelling skills. Demuth addresses a fear all children feel at some point—getting in trouble with the teacher—with gentle humor, although her tone often sounds more like an adult interpreting the frustrations of childhood: "There were so many spelling rules to learn, so many exceptions to every rule." A scene with a baseball game that distracts Montgomery from studying seems dropped in, but the other subplot of his friendship with Ben, who can't draw any better than Montgomery spells, is nicely integrated. Kelley's line drawings provide additional laughs, and their quantity helps make this a good choice for children moving out of easy readers into short chapter books. SDL

FARMER, NANCY *The Warm Place*. Jackson/Orchard, 1995 152p

Library ed. ISBN 0-531-08738-7 \$15.99

Trade ed. ISBN 0-531-06888-9 \$15.95

R Gr. 4-7

Ruva is still just a slip of a young giraffe when she is captured in Africa by the cruel and unscrupulous Skeekee, who intends to sell her to a zoo in San Francisco. The wise sea rat Rodentus von Stroheim the Third is only the first of the helpers to come to Ruva's aid; others include the chameleon Nelson, another rat named Troll, and an African-American boy named Jabila—not to mention the voracious colony of Gross Green Sea-Going Sargasso Snails. Animal fantasies have an annoying tendency to turn coy, but Farmer keeps her story fresh through lots of action and snappy dialogue (Rodentus tells Ruva, "They are taking you to a zoo where ugly little humans called children will throw popcorn at you"). As she demonstrated in *The Ear, the Eye and the Arm* (BCCB 3/94), Farmer knows how to keep her characters moving, from Africa across the sea to the zoo, back out to sea and home

again, pitting brave if sometimes cantankerous heroes against the demonic Skeekee and his horrible family. The judiciously paced text in twenty-four suspenseful chapters offers a month's worth of readalouds. RS

FERRIS, JEAN *Signs of Life*. Farrar, 1995 122p
ISBN 0-374-36909-7 \$14.00

Ad Gr. 7-10

Sixteen-year-old Hannah's life was altered irreversibly when her identical twin, Molly, died in a car accident on New Year's Eve; now Hannah and her parents are vacationing in France, trying to bring the shattered family back together again while her father attains his long-cherished goal of seeing the Lascaux cave paintings. Hannah is disturbed by her reaction to the cave paintings and to the area: she sees visions of the prehistoric people who created the art, visions that suggest a long-ago conflict connected to her own. Ferris, author of the knotty family drama *Relative Strangers* (BCCB 11/93), displays again her smooth writing and her keen perception about family balance as Hannah struggles to come to terms with her grief and her only-child status. Hannah's visions, however, never quite ring true, and the italicized interpolations amid the real plot detract from the intensity of the story. More successful, if a bit overidealized, is Hannah's brief romance with a young Gypsy from a nearby traveling circus; readers may, in fact, be more involved with the pastoral tale of young love in the French countryside than with the core story of adjustment to loss. DS

FISHER, LEONARD EVERETT, ad. *Moses*; ad. and illus. by Leonard Everett Fisher. Holiday House, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8234-1149-4 \$15.95

Ad 6-9 yrs

With mystery, restraint, and solemnity befitting the patriarch, Fisher's thick brush strokes shape the contours of Moses' long life. From the crisp outlines of river reeds slicing across the eerie moonlit night when Moses is stealthily hidden in the bulrushes, to the sunbaked city of Kadesh where the Israelites are dwarfed by the imposing earthen walls and deeply cut shadows, the emotional impact of this story is in the illustrations. In contrast, the text is a distant summary. Some of the transitions are awkward and truncated, and God speaks as if he has an ancient chip on his shoulder: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Remember?" The Exodus is a complex tale, and Fisher does try to cover as much of the entire story as possible. It is useful to have the magnitude of the journey pointed out (and mapped out as well), but there are many elements that need greater elucidation and depth, such as the concept of Passover and an explanation of the Commandments vs. the Law. The factual narrative is biblically accurate, but the staid text and dramatic art are speaking at different levels and the storytelling is stranded somewhere in between. A bibliography and maps are included. HMW

FITCH, JANET *Kicks*. Clarion, 1995 [192p]
ISBN 0-395-69624-0 \$14.95
Reviewed from galleys

M Gr. 7-10

Laurie, fifteen, has been following the lead of her dangerous friend Carla, shoplifting at Frederick's of Hollywood, hitchhiking to the Santa Monica beach, picking up cute guys. But Laurie, inhibited by the strictures of her stern mother, a Russian emigré, isn't that far gone, and recovers her wits in time to both pull Carla from the precipice and give her the boot. Although never as onstage sordid as Shelley

Stoebr's *Weird on the Outside* (BCCB 3/95), there are plenty of seamy moments here to keep fans entertained; pawed and put-upon at every turn, Laurie proves as adept as any Victorian heroine at defending her virtue. While the trappings may be tawdry, the book, like *Go Ask Alice*, is rock-bottom conservative, with its you-should-have-listened-to-mama theme played out as Laurie's mother rescues Carla from what is to all intents and purposes an opium den, populated by drug-dealing, sex-fiend bikers. Fun? Sure. Shallow? Absolutely. RS

FLETCHER, RALPH *Fig Pudding*. Clarion, 1995 [160p]

ISBN 0-395-71125-8 \$14.95

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 4-6

In a series of linked, short-story-like episodes, twelve-year-old Cliff recalls what turned out to be a rough year in his family's life. It's a big family—six kids—and while sibling tussles are the order of the day, bonds remain strong even when second-grader Teddy seems doomed to sit in exile beneath the kitchen table forever for his various transgressions, or when lone sister Cyn decides she'd much rather belong to the vegetarian family down the street. None of them is prepared for the sudden death of eight-year-old Brad in a bicycling accident, and, truthfully, neither are readers, for Brad, despite a memorable evening when he ate the heads off of everybody's marshmallow chickens, is fictionally the least developed of the family members. While we perhaps aren't as saddened by the death as we seem meant to be, the grief of Cliff and the others is palpable and honest in its range of manifestations. References to a grandmother's having fought for suffrage and an uncle's having fought in World War II seem to set the book sometime in the 1960s or early '70s, and the book has the quality of an affectionate family memoir, with humor triumphing over sadness and funny specifics (punishment goes for naught when it's discovered that Teddy *likes* life under the table) that give the book a warm particularity. RS

FORRESTER, SANDRA *Sound the Jubilee*. Lodestar, 1995 184p

ISBN 0-525-67486-1 \$15.99

R Gr. 5-8

Compared to her friends who toil in the cotton fields and live in decrepit slave cabins, eleven-year-old slave Maddie has it fairly easy, working in the big house under a relatively benign mistress and living with her family in relatively comfortable quarters off the kitchen. But, as Maddie's father warns, they are still not free, and Maddie can see the results of brandings, whippings, and privations suffered by the slaves less fortunate—or more courageous—than she. When the mistress, escaping the nearby Union Army, takes Maddie's family with her to retreat on North Carolina's Outer Banks, the family uses its chance to escape and join a black settlement on Roanoke Island, protected—and exploited—by the Union Army. While characterization is somewhat idealized and the writing prone to telling more than showing, there is plenty of action, and Maddie's story is involving as well as revealing of a little-known piece of Civil War history. RS

FRENCH, VIVIAN *Spider Watching*; illus. by Alison Wisenfeld. Candlewick, 1995 27p (Read and Wonder)

ISBN 1-56402-543-8 \$14.95

Ad 4-6 yrs

A girl and her brother love spiders, but when cousin Helen comes for a visit, she screams and runs away from the house spiders living in the shed. However, a

spider's web covered in dew does catch her interest, and when she accidentally tears a hole in the web and sees how quickly and perfectly the spider works to repair the damage, she begins to share the fascination her cousins have with the eight-legged creatures. This story/science book puts background information about spiders, with an assortment of one-line facts, on the left, and the story unfolds independently on the right-hand pages. Though French accomplishes her goal of encouraging children to appreciate spiders and not to shriek at their appearance, this is one of the slighter entries in this series. The book, while pleasant enough, is a barely fleshed-out anecdote with a few spider facts on the side. Wisenfeld's watercolors achieve an unusual stencil effect, and her spiders are both delicate and intricate; the people, in contrast, stand stiffly and stare blankly. Readers in sections of the country populated with brown recluse spiders may be concerned that Helen is encouraged by the children to pick up the shed spiders; one picture does show three poisonous spiders (northern black widow, red widow, and funnel weaver) and the caption says, "Some spiders, like these, are deadly poisonous and should never be touched." SDL

FROELICH, MARGARET WALDEN *That Kookoory!*; illus. by Marla Frazee. Browndeer/Harcourt, 1995 40p
ISBN 0-15-277650-8 \$15.00

Ad 5-8 yrs

Rooster Kookoory is beside himself with excitement about the Edgerton Fair ("Elephants . . . sword swallows, fat ladies, tawny lions, roly-coasters!"), but his human friends don't really mind, saying, "Oh, that rooster! What a pester! What a pother! What a love!" On fair day, a weasel tracks Kookoory throughout the town as he wakes his friends up, and then trails him to Edgerton. When the weasel makes his move, Kookoory's friends come to the rooster's rescue, and then spend a happy day at the fair. While some readers will delight in Froehlich's wordplay ("The baker launched an eye-squinting sneezer of a cloud of powdered sugar at the weasel"), others may grow impatient with the lengthy text and sometimes strained verbiage ("They'd gone zippity-lu and jazz on the roly-coaster"). Illustrator Frazee uses colored-ink washes and delicate black lines with great skill, achieving an old-fashioned appearance that is refreshingly lively. Kookoory is both handsome and comical, the people are nicely individualized, and in the background scenery Frazee manages to include detail and a sense of sweep. SDL

GEORGE, LINDSAY BARRETT *In the Woods: Who's Been Here?*; written and illus. by Lindsay Barrett George. Greenwillow, 1995 42p
Library ed. ISBN 0-688-12319-8 \$14.93
Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-12318-X \$15.00

Ad 5-8 yrs

A brother and sister take a walk with their dog through the woods, where they stop to investigate evidence that animals have been there before them. George alternates between illustrations showing the children as they point out their discoveries (such as pinecone seeds on a stone ledge) and full-page spreads showing the animal doing whatever left the traces behind (in this case, a red squirrel eating seeds). Eight little mysteries are shown, some guessable, some not, culminating in the sight of a picnic basket and a hiding adult (presumably their father). Some children may be troubled by the startling intrusion of pictures showing a goshawk drawing blood from a blue jay with its sharp talons, or of a fox killing a woodchuck; others, of course, will relish the peek into a less bland side of nature than the text's tranquil tone might indicate. The alternation between events of the past

and the present may confuse viewers, but George's gouache paintings capture a remarkable range of textures and light, with great attention to detail in the woodland scenes. The final page gives brief factual information about the animals depicted. SDL

GREENWOOD, BARBARA *A Pioneer Sampler: The Daily Life of a Pioneer Family in 1840*; illus. by Heather Collins. Ticknor, 1995 240p
ISBN 0-395-71540-7 \$18.95 Ad Gr. 3-6

Readers follow the fictional Robertson family through the course of a year to learn about the chores and activities of pioneers, circa 1840. Each chapter, loosely organized around a theme such as "Sheep-Shearing" or "The Peddler's Visit," includes an anecdote involving a Robertson family member and about half a dozen focus articles on related interests. Greenwood details such neglected topics as time-keeping and trout-tickling while glossing over other child-pleasing but less delicate matters—privies and the annual pig-slaughter. Occasionally the focus pieces, which contain most of the volume's factual information, also incorporate references to the Robertsons; students using this work for research must carefully sift fact from fiction. Activity projects (several requiring adult assistance) range from the women's crafts of dyeing and weaving and candledipping to methods for load lifting and hauling relegated to pioneer men. Although the book was originally published in Canada as *A Pioneer Story: The Daily Life of a Canadian Family in 1840*, the locale as presented here gets no more specific than "out west" or "the backwoods"; experiences can be similarly generic: "Every pioneer family had a small flock of sheep." Plentiful detailed sketches enhance the text; a glossary and index are included. EB

HALE, SARAH JOSEPHA *Mary Had a Little Lamb*; illus. by Salley Mavor. Kroupa/Orchard, 1995 26p
Library ed. ISBN 0-531-08725-5 \$14.99
Trade ed. ISBN 0-531-06875-7 \$14.95 R 2-5 yrs

Artist Salley Mavor takes the almost too-familiar American children's poem and gives it a new charge with her fabric-relief illustrations. The pictures look old-fashioned, very much in keeping with the rhyme, but they're actually fresh and unusual. Mavor combines fabrics, embroidery, and many other objects such as small stones and pieces of wood into three-dimensional artwork which is then photographed (with an occasional blurring in the photos). The people are fabric dolls, while Mary's lamb, according to an artist's note, is covered with real wool tied in french knots; the dolls seem a bit stiff, but the lamb is frolicsome and expressive. While the pictures match the poem well, what kids will really enjoy is poring over the many details and figuring out how Mavor made the apples on a tree, lettuce in a garden, or Mary's toes. Even those older than the nursery-rhyme set may want a chance to examine the craftsmanship here. Notes at the end explain the disagreement over the authorship of the poem and the technique of the artwork. SDL

HAN, SUZANNE CROWDER, ad. *The Rabbit's Escape*; illus. by Yumi Heo. Holt, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8050-2675-4 \$15.95 R 5-8 yrs

Following the format of her previous volume, *The Rabbit's Judgment* (BCCB 5/94), Crowder offers another Korean rabbit tale with text in Korean and English.

When the Dragon King of the East Sea falls ill, his physician tells him that he can only be cured by eating the fresh raw liver of a rabbit. A loyal turtle leaves the sea for the land and lures the rabbit back underwater, but the rabbit wiggles out of his dilemma by claiming that he's left his liver aboveground ("Unfortunately, my liver is not with me at the moment") and needs to go fetch it. All ends happily, as the title suggests: Rabbit gets away, a god rewards the turtle for his fidelity with a ginseng cure for the king, and the king recovers fully. Han's text is clean, direct, and spirited, and the additional visceralness of the liver-eating motif should get youngsters' attention. Heo's art (which is, according to the jacket flap, a combination of oil, pencil, and collage) often looks like intricate and stylized cave painting, with figures flying through the pictures in happy defiance of gravity and perspective; the characters are original and eye-catching, with the Dragon King fiercely angular, the turtle luminous and rueful, and the rabbit bulbous yet sly. A note on Han's sources (basically directing readers to her adult collection of folktales) and on the Korean alphabet are included. DS

HAUGAARD, ERIK CHRISTIAN *The Revenge of the Forty-Seven Samurai*. Houghton, 1995 [240p]

ISBN 0-395-70809-5 \$14.95

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 6-9

Lord Kira demands a bribe; Lord Asano refuses to pay; insults and violence between the two lords unleash the Shogun's wrath and Lord Asano is forced to commit ritual suicide, thus compelling his samurai retainers to commit their own lives to avenge their dead master's honor. Narrator Jiro, a lowly servant in the chief samurai's household, observes the intricate plans for revenge and, as a trustworthy if not entirely enthusiastic vassal, he assists in preparing for the final assault on Lord Kira. Privy to elements of the plan, but marginalized from the courtly code that demands human life as payment for debts of honor, Jiro admires the bravery of his betters even as he questions the value of their self-sacrifice. The narrator's ambivalence allows Haugaard to explore ethical implications of the samurais' suicidal mission of honor while he refrains from judging their actions. Plotting and intrigue rather than swordplay propel the action, and bloodthirsty readers must wait as patiently as the conspirators for the climactic attack. An epilogue leaves readers to ponder the mores of this distant culture: Jiro is asked, "Would you have done it?" "No, I would not. . . . But then I am not a samurai." EB

HAYASHI, NANCY *Superbird to the Rescue*; written and illus. by Nancy Hayashi. Dutton, 1995 118p

ISBN 0-525-45198-6 \$13.99

R Gr. 3-5

When a sales clerk forgets to remove a security tag, Jesse and Walter accidentally set off a store alarm, but their encounter with the store detective gives them a great idea: they will catch shoplifters, too, with the aid of their walkie-talkies and Jesse's pet parrot, Zenith. Zenith is so protective of Jesse that she swoops in to save him whenever his brother beats up on him, so Jesse and Walter figure (mistakenly, as it happens) that she will protect him while they are making their "citizen's arrests." Though the action is fairly predictable, there are some good laughs here, and the two young heroes are both likeable and true-to-life in their relish for concocting schemes together. Hayashi's illustrations are casual and zesty. Aside from an abrupt conclusion, this is a solidly entertaining choice for young readers. SDL

HEINS, ETHEL, ad. *The Cat and the Cook and Other Fables of Krylov*; illus. by Anita Lobel. Greenwillow, 1995 32p
 Library ed. ISBN 0-688-12311-2 \$14.93
 Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-12310-4 \$15.00 R 6-9 yrs

Anita Lobel's welcoming cover painting depicts (one assumes) the Russian fabulist Ivan Krylov embraced by his muse, who wears a dress that is woven of stories: the twelve brief fables that comprise this book. At their best, the fables demonstrate the crisp irony that defines the genre. A hungry kitten learns her lesson only too well when a starling convinces her to eat a goldfinch; another cat devours an entire chicken while his master scolds and lectures, oblivious that "words are wasted when it's time for action"; a kite brags of its heights until a lower-flying but untethered butterfly points out that "I roam where I wish. I am free." Some of the selections are slightly more allusive, and a couple ("The Donkey and the Bell," "The Eagle and the Mole") seem to miss the points they were aiming for. Still, the book is an able companion to the omnipresent Aesop, and Lobel's full-page watercolor-and-gouache paintings use thick textures, warm tones, and a generous line to recreate a bucolic Russian milieu. Heins provides a complete and informative note on Krylov and her adaptation of his work. RS

HOPKINS, LEE BENNETT, comp. *Small Talk: A Book of Short Poems*; illus. by Susan Gaber. Harcourt, 1995 48p
 ISBN 0-15-276577-8 \$14.00 R Gr. 1-4

Hopkins collects thirty-three poems that together constitute no more than one hundred lines of poetry: these are very short poems, indeed. Twenty-seven authors are represented, ranging from Mother Goose to Carl Sandburg to several of today's poets for children. Hopkins has loosely arranged the poems into seasons, beginning with spring and Betsy Hearne's "Sssh": "Spring whispers secret/ rain to the listening trees/ till they shout loud green." The poems gradually shift to summer, with lyrics about the sea and about being happily alone (X. J. Kennedy's "In the summer young Angus McQuade/ Carries off to his castle of shade/ Two cool soothing pillows,/ *The Wind in the Willows*,/ And an ocean of iced lemonade") and also about being lonely (Richard Wilbur's "What is the opposite of *two*?/ *A lonely me, a lonely you*"). The second half of the book tends toward the melancholy, as summer turns to fall and the verses dwell on change, growing old, and sadness. It concludes with two more uplifting choices: Eve Merriam's gentle winter poem ending "snowflake feathers/ from snow-white birds/ snow is a poem/ without any words" and Victoria Forrester's poem about poems: "Paper windmills,/ softly blow;/ let them turn,/ let them go./ A poem so spun/ may bring delight/ and words to keep/ against the night." Gaber illustrates each entry with a watercolor or colored-pencil drawing, each image carefully chosen to extend the poem's meaning. The occasional full-page illustration gives variety to break the book up, but the smaller pictures with their geometric borders are particularly skillfully rendered. The combination of brevity with a format using lots of white space and large type may make this one of the more enticing poetry books for young readers. SDL

HURWITZ, JOHANNA, ed. *Birthday Surprises: Ten Great Stories to Unwrap*. Morrow, 1995 119p
 ISBN 0-688-13194-8 \$15.00 R Gr. 4-7

Ten children's authors including the editor create stories based on this premise: a

child receives many presents on his or her birthday, but one beautifully wrapped box is empty. Richard Peck takes the opportunity to unveil a little more of the enmity between his much-loved character Blossom Culp and her opponent Letty Shambaugh; David Adler's cheeky narrator delights in manipulating the adults around her, wanting to emulate her uncle who sends her "snow from Alaska. Isn't he great?" Some gifts help teach lessons, as in Pam Conrad's story of a young pioneer woman, and in Ann M. Martin's story where the hero is disappointed by his grandfather's empty box until the forest animals convince him that "there is no such thing as empty." Two poignant stories take place in hospital rooms: in Jane Yolen's, a girl's mother gives her a beautiful but empty box, saying, "It's you" with her last breath; in James Howe's acutely observed tale, a boy lies near death but is encouraged to fight by a mysterious man and his gift of the empty box. The book's narrow premise serves to highlight the different choices each author has made: there are wide ranges in setting, tone, narrator, and mood. The formal variety—the book includes a fairy tale by Barbara Ann Porte, a story in rhyme by Karla Kuskin, and Johanna Hurwitz's epistolary story—keeps things fresh throughout. An introduction by Hurwitz explains the concept, and by the end readers may feel challenged to figure out how many changes they could ring on a single theme. SDL

JENNINGS, LINDA *Tom's Tail*; illus. by Tim Warnes. Little, 1995 [26p]

ISBN 0-316-13341-8 \$14.95

Reviewed from galleys

R 3-7 yrs

Fussy Tom the piglet compares his "curly-twirly" tail with the other animals' and finds it sadly lacking: "Even the rat's tail is less curly than mine," said Tom miserably." Tiring of his complaints, the other farm animals try various solutions, and finally they hit on pulling the tail and coating it with mud until it dries and stiffens into a "long, thin pencil." Tom's sharp little tail then, inevitably, makes him a nuisance to the other animals. By the story's end, Tom has his curly-twirly tail back, but begins yearning for a "long, elegant nose like Hannibal the horse instead of this silly snout." Children always enjoy feeling superior to characters who are more foolish than they are, and they'll warm to Tom, who, despite his complaining nature, is a lovable little pig. Warnes' paintings match the zippy story perfectly, with his comical animals and cheery palette; the series of pictures showing Tom marching around the farm with Sam the sheepdog pulling his tail straight is particularly funny. Though Tom is never satisfied, story-hour listeners certainly will be. SDL

JOHNSTON, TONY *Alice Nizzy Nazy: The Witch of Santa Fe*; illus. by Tomie dePaola. Putnam, 1995 [32p]

ISBN 0-399-22788-1 \$15.95

Reviewed from galleys

R 4-8 yrs

As her closing note tells, Tony Johnston has taken the familiar old Russian witch, Baba Yaga, and moved her "to a snazzy new location." Alice Nizzy Nazy lives in the desert in an adobe hut that stands on roadrunner feet, surrounded by prickly pear cactus which can all move around on command. When a little girl, Manuela, comes looking for her missing sheep at the hut, she is caught by Alice Nizzy Nazy and popped in her cooking pot. Alice, with her yellow skin, beady red eyes, black snapping teeth, and hair in strings of chiles, is a fearsome sight, but Manuela bravely

and gently persists in trying to get back her sheep. Since, as it turns out from the witch's preliminary taste of broth, good children such as Manuela taste sour, she is released along with her sheep, and Alice takes off in her flying mortar to find a naughty child to devour instead. Johnston's writing snaps with life, and her characteristic asides ("Oh, my!") build in some storytelling flair. dePaola has filled the book with the bright colors of the Southwest, using brick red borders and lots of teal, purple, and orange. Alice is a satisfying blend of spookiness and silliness, and her sidekick, the great horned lizard, takes in all of Alice's wicked actions with a worried expression. For children unfamiliar with Baba Yaga, this may seem funnier the second time around, when they can be certain Manuela is not going to be dinner; then they will love the goofier moments and still have a good shiver. SDL

KATZ, WELWYN WILTON *Time Ghost*. McElderry, 1995 171p
ISBN 0-689-80027-4 \$16.00

R Gr. 6-9

An exceptionally well-executed time-travel matrix forms the structural heart of this novel about two girls, Sara and Dani, who, with their brothers and Sara's formidable grandmother, travel to the Arctic—what's left of it anyway. The setting is the mid-twenty-first century when much of earth's natural beauty and resources have been destroyed by pollution, overpopulation, and the "Greysuits" (Grandma's name for an ever-greedy corporate elite), who are intent upon taking the rest. In contrast to the nature-loving Dani, Sara has been whiny and scared the whole trip, but both girls are frightened when, along with one of the Greysuits, they find themselves back in the past, specifically Grandma's past, when she was a young girl living on a quiet lake in 1993. While there isn't enough room in this review to go into the details of how the time travel works, it in fact works very well indeed, and Katz brings the travelers back home (always a trick) with the same assurance. The ecological theme occasionally rears its head into preachiness, but it is generally kept in check by the slick turns of plot and the realism of the characters. Grandma may be right, but she is rather overbearing, and Sara's reliving of a crucial episode in Grandma's girlhood brings each to a more reasonable understanding of the other. RS

KEISTER, DOUGLAS *Fernando's Gift/El Regalo de Fernando*; written and illus. with photographs by Douglas Keister. Sierra Club, 1995 [32p]
ISBN 0-87156-414-9 \$16.95

R 5-9 yrs

Fernando goes to bed at night lulled by the sound of rain on his tin-roofed house and wakes up every morning with the prospect of fresh bananas growing outside his window—all he has to do is pick one. Keister photographed the Vanegas family in their home in the Costa Rican rain forest and the bilingual text is narrated by young Fernando, whose wide smile and wiry body exude playful energy throughout the book. The text is honest, refreshingly unsentimental, and even humorous at times: "I hear that in some places, they give dogs special names, just like people. We call our dogs Brown Dog and Black Dog." The plight of the rain forest is often described with unnecessary melodrama, but here Keister simply lets the daily life of Fernando unfold in quiet yet heartfelt ways: Fernando gives his friend Carmina a sapling for her eighth birthday and they plant it together with the unassuming wish "that it will be safe and live a long, long time." Both the text and the photographs are presented clearly and simply. Each spacious text page is decorated with a chocolate-brown hieroglyphic design and the paper itself is warm and grainy (and, according to a note, manufactured from tree-farm wood). Al-

though harsh lighting makes a few indoor shots rather surreal, the photos are generally lush and inviting, especially one showing Fernando and his dad laughing and splashing underneath a waterfall. Keister does not presume to give easy answers or even the full complexity of the issue, but he does provide an admirable glimpse into the life of one family who genuinely loves the rain forest and who are trying to create a sustainable living from it. HMW

KIMMEL, ERIC A., ad. *The Valiant Red Rooster: A Story from Hungary*; illus. by Katya Arnold. Holt, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8050-2781-5 \$15.95

R 4-9 yrs

When a "kindly old woman" runs out of grain and money, her valiant red rooster tells her, "Now I will provide for you." While pecking in the road for spilled grain, the rooster finds a diamond button, but when a greedy sultan spots the rooster with the button, he steals it. After telling the sultan "You had no right to steal my button," the rooster sits on sultan's window and crows, "Ku-keri-keri! The button belongs to me!" The sultan orders his soldiers—the bondarjis, the sipahis, and the bashi-bazouks—to throw the rooster into the well, but the rooster drains the wellwater into his gizzard and returns. The rooster's ingenuity and his tremendous gizzard save him each time, until the sultan ends up with a group of angry bees down his pants and decides to return the button to the rooster. Kimmel tells the story with such enormous energy and momentum that children may find it difficult to sit still to listen; they will find the sultan's defeat and the feast the rooster brings home to the old woman most satisfying. Arnold's paintings, in her distinctive vibrant watercolors with thick black lines superimposed, are equally vigorous. It is not always easy to distinguish the features of each picture in the jumble of line and color, but the magenta skin and lumpy build of the old woman and of the sultan are comical and grotesque. Kimmel includes source notes for this story, which is based on one found in Kate Seredy's *The Good Master*. SDL

KING-SMITH, DICK *Sophie Is Seven*; illus. by David Parkins. Candlewick, 1995 123p
ISBN 1-56402-542-X \$14.95

Ad Gr. 3-5

The redoubtable Sophie, "lady farmer," has returned, unmellowed by her increasing age. She's still trying to earn money towards her farm (she attempts a walkathon around the backyard but neglects to sign up sponsors beforehand), she and her pal Andrew help the teacher—or is it the other way around?—with the school farm unit, she plays the Pied Piper of Hamelin in the school play, and she finally gets to start her long-awaited riding lessons. This doesn't quite have the dash of previous volumes: the humor is more often pointed towards adults, the plot is more episodic, and Sophie's adversary Dawn seems more like a victim here than an enemy, since she does nothing in this book to warrant Sophie's repugnance. Vigorous Sophie is still an engaging heroine, however, and fans of her earlier adventures won't want to miss this one. DS

KORNBLUTH, JESSE *Airborne: The Triumph and Struggle of Michael Jordan*. Macmillan, 1995 [112p] illus. with photographs
ISBN 0-02-750922-2 \$15.00

Reviewed from galleys

Ad Gr. 5-8

The media and marketing blitz surrounding Michael Jordan is a phenomenon in itself, and Kornbluth joins the journalistic fray by compiling his interviews with

Jordan alongside personal observations, accounts from family and friends, and action photos. Due in large part to Jordan's (temporary, as we all now know) retirement and the tragic death of his father, the struggles somewhat outweigh the triumphs in this rather sobering biography. Kornbluth chronologically tracks Jordan's life from childhood "laziness" (all he wanted to do was play sports), high-school rejection (he didn't make the varsity team), collegiate recognition, NBA victories, and finally to Jordan's future, which was uncertain at the time of the book's publication. Kornbluth emphasizes the business of basketball, and he portrays Jordan as a misunderstood artist trying to compete against the demons of the spotlight. Sometimes he relies too much on undocumented speculation (there are no citations to authenticate his assertions) and sensationalized sound bites ("It took a bullet to his father's heart to get his attention") that make Jordan's life seem like a made-for-TV movie, and readers may be left with many unanswered questions about Jordan's opinions, game strategies, and personal relationships. However, kids will learn about contracts, salaries, the Nike corporation, and advertising—important aspects of the game that are played out behind the scenes. Readers searching for greater insight into Michael Jordan as a person may find more depth in his own intimate autobiography, *Rare Air*, but this biography is like a Jordan free-throw shot: it's predictable, but it places the ball squarely in the net. HMW

KROLL, VIRGINIA *Jaha and Jamil Went Down the Hill: An African Mother Goose*. Charlesbridge, 1995 32p

Library ed. ISBN 0-88106-867-5 \$15.88

Trade ed. ISBN 0-88106-866-7 \$14.95

Paper ed. ISBN 0-881060865-9 \$6.95

NR 3-6 yrs

Even the most fervent multiculturalists will indulge in a little eye-rolling at this calculated offering of rhymes that "Mother Goose might have written, had she visited Africa": "Jaha and Jamil went down the hill/ To fetch a pail of water./ They met Atu and Siwatu/ And Asha with her daughter." Without the mini-drama that the original "Jack and Jill" presents, that verse gives children no reason to remember it. Mother Goose is a tough old bird, and it seems unlikely that she would have much patience with the prissiness often in evidence here; never one overly given to messages, she might well peck at such sermons as "Canopies are falling down,/ Falling down, falling down./ Canopies are falling down,/ Sad rain forest!" Crowded and stiffly drafted watercolor illustrations and labels set each rhyme in a particular African nation, but there are no notes or explanations as to how the rhymes were assigned their locales. RS

LAUBER, PATRICIA *Who Eats What?: Food Chains and Food Webs*; illus. by Holly Keller. HarperCollins, 1995 32p (Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science)

Library ed. ISBN 0-06-022982-9 \$14.89

Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-022981-0 \$15.00

R Gr. 1-3

Lauber demonstrates the interconnectedness of nature by showing how creatures form chains through the foods they eat. A leaf is eaten by a caterpillar, which is eaten by a wren, which is eaten by a hawk: the hawk is the top of the food chain, "the one nobody else eats," but the hawk needs the leaf just as much as the caterpillar does. Lauber gives several examples, from short chains (apple to child) to the web of connections between sea creatures. She uses sea otters to show how the

disappearance of one link in the chain can disrupt the flow of food both up and down: when the otters were overhunted they stopped eating sea urchins, who then consumed the kelp beds leaving no food for the fish; when the otters were restored, the other animals began to flourish again. Keller's watercolor-and-line illustrations do much to lighten the serious tone of the text, and they make the information clear with simple diagrams containing plants, animals, and helpful directional arrows. Primary-grade students will be able to read this alone, but even preschoolers will be able to understand a rather sophisticated point in the science of conservation. SDL

LEVINE, ELLEN *Anna Pavlova: Genius of the Dance*. Scholastic, 1995 132p illus. with photographs
ISBN 0-590-44304-6 \$14.95 R Gr. 5-8

Pavlova is the most famous figure in early twentieth-century classical ballet, and Levine paints a picture of the great ballerina's life, covering Pavlova's early years in Russia, her later settling in England, and then her extensive touring through Europe, the United States, South America, and Asia. While the book has a distinctly hagiographic tone, and some scenes from the dancer's early life seem to be fictionalized (no source notes are provided for dialogue), this is a competent account with many enlivening specifics, such as the fact that all the dancers in the company had to "Russianize" their names for PR purposes. There's not much insight into Pavlova's character and little examination of her impact on dance, but it's a good old-fashioned account of a glamorous life. A glossary, bibliography, and index are included; several pages of black-and-white photographs appear in a glossy insert. DS

MAHY, MARGARET *The Pirate Uncle*; illus. by Barbara Steadman. Overlook, 1995 128p
ISBN 0-87951-555-4 \$14.95 R Gr. 4-7

Nick, age nine, and his little sister Caroline feel a bit nervous about staying with Uncle Ludovic, whom their mother refers to as "a pirate." While driving in his rickety car to his house by a New Zealand beach, Ludovic fills the kids in on how he became a pirate ("I was led astray by jolly companions. And then I got treasure fever"), and he enlists their help in becoming reformed. Eventually Nick figures out that Ludovic's piracy is far more show than reality, and he and Caroline relax and settle in to enjoy their vacation. Mahy has sketched the dream trip for many a youngster: days on the beach and in the water with a slightly mysterious but warmhearted uncle who delights in such tricks as turning lunch into a treasure hunt. There's never a truly anxious moment for the reader, and if Mahy doesn't keep a tight focus on her hero, the chattiness of her style allows for a certain looseness in structure. Short chapters and conversational tone make the book (first published in Great Britain in 1977) a good read-aloud choice for children as young as third grade. SDL

MANUSHKIN, FRAN *Rachel, Meet Your Angel!* Puffin, 1995 118p (Angel Corners)
Paper ed. ISBN 0-14-037198-2 \$3.99 M Gr. 4-6

The "Angel Corners" logo—a halo—and sweetsy cover art make this paperback look like a series offering from a religious press, but fear not—these angels are

strictly nonsectarian and the only higher power mentioned is Florinda, Queen of the Angels and principal of the Angel Academy, which trains guardian angels. Angel Corners is in the time-honored tradition of a series in which four girls have a club (the Angel Club); the twist is that each girl gets a guardian angel to help her through her problems. Rachel (new girl in town, bereft after her father's death, beset by class-queen Felicia) is assigned Merrie, who first appears to Rachel as a bird with "glittery red wings" that hovers about to clue Rachel in to solutions to her dilemmas. Sorry, folks—it ain't gonna fly. The appeal of a series like this is in its reflection and idealization of everyday life, allowing its characters to face small but interesting challenges—the angel angle is silly and superfluous. While the writing here is competent it cannot overcome the vacuousness of the story's premise and its too-easy celestial solutions. RS

MARINO, JAN *The Mona Lisa of Salem Street*. Little, 1995 155p
ISBN 0-316-54614-3 \$14.95 Ad Gr. 5-8

After a series of stays with other relatives, orphaned Nettie and her brother John Peter are sent at last by nasty Grandma Bessie to live with their "rich" grandfather in Boston. Nettie, initially excited, warns herself not to learn to love this relative because inevitably they will be sent back, but she's horrified to realize her new residence is a funeral home. Her brother, who previously wouldn't speak to anyone but Nettie, warms up instantly to their loving, lonely Italian grandfather, but Nettie remains reserved. Great-aunt Aleta, an aspiring actress, seems far more glamorous, though John Peter pegs her as a phony. Through a dead-pet-as-catalyst plot twist at the end, Nettie confronts the deaths of her parents and allows herself to finally feel as "warm and safe" with her grandfather as she had with her parents. Some of the moments are tender, as when the children find the markings on a door measuring the growth of their father, but while the book mostly seems set in a gentler time than the present, occasional references to President Clinton and cellular phones give pause. The subplot of Nettie's neighbor Josephine and her agoraphobic mother, the "Mona Lisa of Salem Street," seems almost tacked on, and the plot generally lurches along haphazardly. Marino writes elegantly, though, and her characters, even feckless Aleta, are both believable and likable. SDL

MARKLE, SANDRA *Outside and Inside Snakes*. Macmillan, 1995 40p illus.
with photographs ISBN 0-02-762315-7 \$16.00 Ad Gr. 2-4

Markle, author of *Outside and Inside Birds* (BCCB 11/94), this time walks children through a snake's anatomy, leading the way with questions ("Is this a bright yellow worm or the snake's tail?") and with comparisons to a child's own body ("Its body, like yours, can only bend where two bones meet. Having lots of small bones lets it coil and bend easily"). Once again, she interweaves images, captions, and text into a coherent whole, and uses crisp, striking photos and the occasional computer-enhanced picture. Though the brilliantly colored emerald boa on the cover is alluring, this is not a book that will convert anyone from snake hater to snake lover, with its many photos of snakes attacking or devouring prey and its extreme close-ups of fangs and venom (though for some, of course, this will be the book's high point). Markle's organization occasionally falters, with discussions of skin, for instance, spread throughout the book; in several places it is difficult to see what she refers to in the caption, and one caption misses labeling the photo's focal

point, a green oval-shaped organ in a dissected snake's abdomen. Libraries with lots of young herpetologists will want this title, which includes a combined glossary/index. SDL

MIKAELSEN, BEN *Stranded*. Hyperion, 1995 [288p]

Library ed. ISBN 0-7868-2059-4 \$15.89

Trade ed. ISBN 0-7868-0072-0 \$15.95

Reviewed from galleys

Ad Gr. 5-7

The loss of her right foot, severed in an accident four years ago, is the least of twelve-year-old Koby's problems. Her parents are arguing more and more frequently, and while boating through the Florida Keys she's discovered an injured mother-and-son pair of pilot whales (a kind of dolphin) who will only survive with her intervention. Mikaelson (see *Sparrow Hawk Red*, BCCB 6/93) knows the first rule of adventure stories for children: put the kid—hero and reader—smack in the middle. Even as readers empathize with Koby's various dilemmas, they will envy the circumstances of her afterschool life, boating and swimming unattended through the Keys and free to find her own crisis to handle. Heck, she even *lives* on a boat—until her mother becomes fed up with their hand-to-mouth existence and moves herself and Koby to a friend's house on solid ground. Although the plotting tends towards didactic ends—Koby saves the dolphins, overcomes her embarrassment about her disability, and brings her parents back together, however tentatively—Koby is a seaworthy heroine who makes things happen. (An obliging hurricane does its bit as well.) Girls don't often enough feature in such fast-paced fare, so this is definitely welcome; besides, it's refreshing to see a novel about dolphins that don't have ESP. RS

MORPURGO, MICHAEL, ad. *Arthur, High King of Britain*; illus. by Michael Foreman. Harcourt, 1995 138p

ISBN 0-15-200080-1 \$19.95

R Gr. 6-9

It's hard to resist an Arthurian legend in full-fledged regalia (complete with an extra-large trim size), and this majestic vision of the glory days of Camelot is enticing indeed. The sweep of this version encompasses a rich array of beloved stories (Excalibur, Guinevere, Lancelot) as well as some of their noteworthy yet lesser-known kin (Tristram and Iseult, Gawain and the Green Knight, Percivale). Although he offers no source notes, Morpurgo has clearly done wide research, and he weaves a tapestry of different tales from different time periods. He follows in a time-honored tradition of adaptation and abridgement, but he never neglects the integrity and authenticity of the stories he tells. The framing device is simple: a modern boy stumbles onto a remote island where he is cared for by an ancient man claiming to be Arthur Pendragon. Arthur tells the boy his life story in an almost painfully honest retrospective. He is a complex character: an impetuous youth, an august yet sometimes rash ruler, a jealous lover, and a tortured man trying to live up to his epic persona. It is a heady mix, but Foreman illustrates the weighty legend with a lighter touch. His soft watercolor scenes are pricked with a cool freshness; blues, greens, golds, and purples shimmer together into variances of seasonal changes, windswept hilltops, and shadowed castles. Morpurgo's storytelling is graced with smooth transitions and sharp-witted asides that serve the mythic tales well. This is a far cry from *The Sword in the Stone*'s lightheartedness; it's the real thing—darkness and all—and budding Arthurian devotees may want to read this as a tantalizing precursor to *Le Morte d'Arthur*. HMW

MURPHY, JIM *The Great Fire*. Scholastic, 1995 144p illus. with photographs
ISBN 0-590-47267-4 \$16.95 R* Gr. 4-7

See this month's Big Picture, p. 297.

NAMIOKA, LENSEY *Yang the Third and Her Impossible Family*; illus. by Kees de Kieffe. Little, 1995 [144p]
ISBN 0-316-59726-0 \$15.95 Ad Gr. 4-6

Unlike her younger brother (see *Yang the Youngest and His Terrible Ear*, BCCB 6/92), Yingmei (Mary) is a talented musician; her problem is that she wants desperately to become friends with Holly, a pretty, popular girl in the school orchestra. Holly doesn't seem all that interested until it appears that Yingmei will be able to take a kitten, forbidden by Holly's parents, off her hands. The kitten is forbidden by Yingmei's parents as well, and although the subplot about Yingmei and Fourth Brother hiding the kitten in their basement is clichéd and formulaic, it provides light relief to the more serious story about Yingmei's attempts to fit into American culture—not an easy task, considering her “impossible” family. Her father sometimes mispronounces English to embarrassing effect (“lice” for “rice,” for example) and her mother continually if unknowingly thwarts Yingmei's friendship with Holly by alienating Holly's mother with inappropriate questions and compliments (“Why, you're not skinny at all, Mrs. Hanson. You're actually quite fat!”) that were considered polite back in China, but aren't in America, where the Yang family has lived for just over a year. Yingmei learns her lessons (including the fact that Holly isn't worth it), makes a good friend elsewhere, and finds a home for the kitten, all of which is predictable but satisfying, and her bouncy narration is a refreshing contrast to the more sober “multicultural” fare we've been seeing. Occasional line drawings are witty and graceful. RS

NEWMAN, LESLÉA *Too Far Away to Touch*; illus. by Catherine Stock. Clarion, 1995 [32p]
ISBN 0-395-68968-6 \$14.95
Reviewed from galleys R 5-8 yrs

Stock's gravely tender charcoal-and-watercolor paintings make a lovely complement to Newman's touching portrait of the love between little Zoe and her uncle Leonard, who is dying of AIDS. Uncle Leonard has arranged plans for one of their “great adventures”: he is taking her to the Hayden Planetarium, where Uncle Leonard explains that the stars are “too far away to touch, but close enough to see.” That image recurs when Sophie, Uncle Leonard and his companion Nathan go to the beach one evening, where they spot a shooting star and Sophie talks to her uncle about his disease, asking where he will go after he dies: “I don't know where I'll go,” Uncle Leonard said, “but I know where I'll be. Too far away to touch, but close enough to see.” Adults will be hard put to make it through this dry-eyed. The text has a direct simplicity that has eluded other picture books on the subject such as Patricia Quinlan's *Tiger Flowers* (BCCB 7/94), and Stock's pictures move quietly between such light-filled scenes as Zoe and Uncle Leonard snacking at a cafe (where Leonard takes off his beret to reveal his newly scarce hair, “part of the disease”) and another with uncle and niece holding each other on the beach blanket beneath the stars. Whether the book's quiet power will speak to young children is another question. There isn't really a story, and some children may not understand, as Zoe does, that she will be able to “see” Uncle Leonard every time

she thinks of him, particularly since this idea is conveyed metaphorically, with Zoe "seeing" the shooting star after it has disappeared. Still, the book is a poignant respite from the more didactic and bibliotherapeutic titles that have sprung up in response to the AIDS crisis. RS

OLD, WENDIE C. *Stacy Had a Little Sister*; illus. by Judith Friedman. Whitman, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8075-7598-4 \$13.95 Ad 4-7 yrs

Stacy greets her new baby sister Ashley with mild skepticism and a slight case of jealousy; when the baby dies in her sleep at a few months of age, Stacy wonders whether she has in some way caused the baby's death ("Did she die because Stacy had wished Ashley would go away?"). Absorbed in their own mourning, the otherwise affectionate parents are not aware of their daughter's confusion until Stacy timidly asks, "Will I catch SIDS when I go to sleep?" In frankly discussing Ashley's death, the entire family begins to recover from their grief. Old somewhat simplifies the messy, anguished emotions which are to be expected following a death; although mention is made of the parents' moodiness and withdrawal, Stacy herself displays no overt behavioral changes. The parents' response to Stacy's frightened query—awkwardly explaining the SIDS acronym before getting to the heart of the question—is unrealistic. The no-nonsense introductory note to parents which sorts SIDS facts from myths may prove to be as valuable as the text to families struggling to explain this tragedy to a small child. EB

ONYEFULU, IFEOMA *Emeka's Gift: An African Counting Story*; written and illus. with photographs by Ifeoma Onyefulu. Cobblehill, 1995 19p
ISBN 0-525-65205-1 \$14.99 R 3-6 yrs

With a more cohesive structure than her previous concept book, *A Is for Africa* (BCCB 9/93), author/photographer Onyefulu counts from one to ten as a young boy goes on a journey to visit his grandmother. Emeka ("One boy") passes two friends playing a game, three women on their way to the market, where he sees four new brooms, five children in hats, six beaded necklaces, etc. This idea isn't new, but it's nicely done, with Emeka's desire to bring his grandmother a present providing a slender narrative thread and simple information about Nigerian village life making the book useful for pre-primary crosscultural understanding (although it would have been helpful had the author included the local language's words for the numbers). Color photos are clear and countable; the design is clean and open. RS

PHILIP, NEIL, comp. *Songs Are Thoughts: Poems of the Inuit*; illus. by Maryclare Foa. Orchard, 1995 26p
ISBN 0-531-06893-5 \$15.95 Ad 5-8 yrs

Although a list of sources and an introduction precede this picture-book collection of Inuit "songs" (many collected by explorer Knud Rasmussen), most readers are going to need more information for understanding the context of the lyrics: how were they sung? how were they translated? While they may be culturally authentic, when taken on their own in translation some of the poems (a term used interchangeably with songs here) seem verbally sterile ("A wonderful occupation/ Making songs/ But all too often they/ Are failures") and the untranslated ejaculations ("Wa-wa," "Hayai-ya-haya") will be greeted with "what does that mean?," a question this

book does not answer. There are some strong selections: "The Mother's Song," a sweet lullaby; "Bear Hunting," in which a game of "catch-me-who-can" ends in death; "The Old Man's Song," which poses four riddles ("The sun's origin,/ The moon's nature,/ The minds of women,/ And why people have so many lice"). While the text holds too few such surprises, Maryclare Foa's oil paintings facing each poem combine a folklike directness with energetic brushwork to add life and give some cultural context. RS

PINKNEY, ANDREA DAVIS *Hold Fast to Dreams*. Morrow, 1995 [112p]

ISBN 0-688-12832-7 \$15.00

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 5-7

Dee has been apprehensive about her family's move from Baltimore to suburban Connecticut; she just knows that she's going to be the only African-American kid in the seventh grade. And so she is, but persistence, self-respect, and talent with a camera help her find a place as well as enabling her to offer sisterly support to her younger sibling Lindsay, who has elected to attend a private school instead, and who faces racist taunting from the leading girls' clique. Dee's narration is rueful, funny, and engaging, and while the story has a clearly didactic intent, its lessons are for the most part capably integrated into event and character. RS

PITRE, FELIX, ad. *Paco and the Witch: A Puerto Rican Folktale*; illus. by Christy Hale. Lodestar, 1995 32p

ISBN 0-525-67501-9 \$13.99

Spanish ed. *Paco y la bruja* ISBN 0-525-67514-0

Ad 4-8 yrs

In this Puerto Rican variation of the Rumpelstiltskin story, Paco is captured in the woods by an ugly old *bruja* (witch) who threatens to make him into the *carne* for her stew unless he can guess her name. While slavishly drawing water for the witch, Paco meets a crab who puts him onto *la bruja's* true identity. Foiled and enraged, the witch seeks the animal who blew the whistle on her; she tricks the crab into playing a rhyming game in which he inadvertently admits his guilt, and he scurries under a rock to avoid her wrath—where, of course, he is to this day. Pitre's telling is liberally sprinkled with Spanish terms, each of which is defined in context when it first appears; with over forty words and phrases introduced, frequent interruptions are choppy, confusing, and a bit tiresome. Bright, stylized acrylics provide lots of energy with their swooping, exaggerated lines and durable purple tones. This fresh spin on a popular tale may attract listeners drawn to foreign language books and ESL students who will appreciate familiar vocabulary as they wrestle the vagaries of English. A source note and glossary are included, and an all-Spanish text edition is available. EB

RYLANT, CYNTHIA *Henry and Mudge and the Best Day of All*; illus. by Suçie Stevenson. Macmillan, 1995 40p

ISBN 0-02-778012-0 \$14.00

R Gr. K-3

Henry's May 1st birthday is the "best day" of the title: after waking up Mudge with the promise of "lots and lots of crackers," Henry discovers the house, even the bathroom, festooned with balloons. Strawberry pancakes for the whole family are followed later that afternoon by a birthday party with friends (and their dogs). The guests start out shy, but the carnival-type games in the backyard get everyone in the party mood, and Mudge is particularly happy when crackers fall from a

piñata. At the end, the family snoozes in the grass with big smiles all around. Since Mudge is peripheral to the action on Henry's big day, this isn't as effective as earlier titles, but a joyful feeling pervades the book. Rylant manages again to take a simple childhood experience and make it special while keeping the text easy to read and understand. Jaunty line-and-watercolor pictures capture the ecstatic expressions, and Stevenson's style remains free and breezy; her use of white over colors occasionally detracts from her crisp lines, and Mudge appears much yellower than in previous books. Nonetheless, Henry's birthday makes another fine outing for this pair of friends. SDL

SANDEMAN, ANNA *Bones*; illus. by Ian Thompson and with photographs. Copper Beech, 1995 30p (Body Books)
ISBN 1-56294-621-8 \$12.90 Ad Gr. 2-4

A chatty, clearly developed text explains how bones hold up our bodies and how muscles, joints, and ligaments work together to facilitate movement. There are some quirky facts ("You have the same number of bones in your neck as a giraffe—seven"), interesting photos (the tallest man alive), and helpful diagrams (living bone tissue). The color photos of energetic kids are overlaid with skeletal drawings, and the effect is slyly amusing and lively—a refreshing change from the typical dead-skeleton-on-a-post routine. Kids will appreciate the section on broken bones and may be surprised to learn that they have more bones than their elders do. The information is sketchy at points (the nutrition section does not even mention calcium) and a glossary is sorely missed, leaving terms such as blood clots and tendons undefined and confusing. Generally, however, this is an animated and satisfying introduction. An index is included. HMW

SANFIELD, STEVE, ad. *Bit by Bit*; illus. by Susan Gaber. Philomel, 1995 [32p]
ISBN 0-399-22736-9 \$15.95
Reviewed from galleys R 3-7 yrs

On the cover, a storyteller holds his own copy of this very book, which cover shows *another* him holding *another* book, and so on, thus giving us a hint of the sly humor of the story and pictures inside. Based, according to the author's note, on an old Yiddish or Russian folk song his grandmother sang, the book tells the familiar story of a beloved piece of cloth (for another recent version see Phoebe Gilman's *Something from Nothing*, BCCB 2/94). Zundel the tailor eventually saves enough money to buy cloth to make himself a coat, which he loves so much that "he wore it and wore it and wore it and wore it until bit by bit he w—o—r—e it out." Taking the remaining good cloth from the coat, he remakes it into a jacket, which he wears out again and remakes the cloth into a vest. The cycle continues until there was "just enough of that beautiful cloth . . . for me to begin this story all over again," and our storyteller, smiling in satisfaction at the story's conclusion, returns to the illustrations with his own now-closed book. Sanfield retells the story rhythmically and with humor, and Gaber's illustrations, with their clever frame of the storyteller's performance and recursive book jacket, add immensely to the fun and extend the story. With each change in the cloth, Zundel's life has progressed, as he meets a woman, marries, and has a baby; the child grows till there are five candles on a birthday cake and another baby is on the way. Filled with movement and comic touches, the paintings are richly intense with lots of oranges and blues, and the pairing of the circular story with book covers echoing into infinity shows how well story and pictures work together. SDL

SATTLER, HELEN RONEY *The Book of North American Owls*; illus. by Jean Day Zallinger. Clarion, 1995 [64p]

ISBN 0-395-60524-5 \$15.95

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 4-7

Sattler opens with an anecdote from her childhood, when her father got rid of an owl living in their barn; she notes that while some people dislike owls because they are birds of prey, "most people, however, are as fascinated by and respectful of owls as I am." Sattler claims that most of the information known about owls has been learned in the fifteen years since they became legally protected and scientifically observed. She includes chapters on their predatory skills, their complicated courtship rituals, owl babies (and their extremely protective parents), and the future prospects for owls, enlivening her discussion with intriguing tidbits, for example, about the owls who keep snakes in their nests as "housekeepers." The second half of the book devotes a page apiece to each of the North American owls, with a large watercolor illustration and a map showing its range. There is a list of owls by family, genus, and species, a bibliography, and an index. Clean book design, with large type, lots of white space, and plenty of softly realistic pictures make this both informative and attractive, a good choice for owl-lovers and report-writers alike. SDL

SHELBY, ANNE *Homeplace*; illus. by Wendy Anderson Halperin. Jackson/Orchard, 1995 32p

Library ed. ISBN 0-531-08732-8 \$15.99

Trade ed. ISBN 0-531-06882-X \$15.95

R 5-8 yrs

"Your great great-great-great-grandpa built this house," the story starts, and it goes on to tell how he planted the land while his wife worked inside and took care of the children, one of whom was the listener's great-great-great-grandpa, and then he grew up . . . And so on, down the generations for 185 years with each generation adding to the house and taking care of the land, until the speaker is revealed to be a grandmother speaking to her young granddaughter. The theme of local constancy and change, reminiscent of Nadia Wheatley's *My Place* (BCCB 7/90), is attractively expressed in the narrator's gentle storytelling prose ("Here you are, growing like a melon in a patch, like tulips in the springtime of the year"), although squirmy youngsters may be waiting for something more active to happen than merely the passage of time. The subdued pencil-and-watercolor illustrations are tender but sturdy, with layouts of inspired variation: the pictures shift from single images in delicately scrolled frames, to multipaneled scenes in an array of sizes, to door-frame half moons, each showing bits and pieces of daily life to give the flavor of each pictured era in the two centuries chronicled. This is in many ways an American romantic ideal that is an American rarity, so many contemporary youngsters may well find it exotic; they'll still enjoy the book as a quiet family readaloud, and it's a natural for Grandparents' Day. DS

SLEPIAN, JAN *Pinocchio's Sister*. Philomel, 1995 [128p]

ISBN 0-399-22811-X \$14.95

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 4-7

Ten-year-old Martha is part of her ventriloquist father's vaudeville act, but she's upstaged by Iris, the wooden dummy who's the star of the show and the apple of Martha's father's eye. Currently staying in Mama Rosie Pelosi's theatrical board-

inghouse, Martha makes friends with Mama Pelosi and with Stashu, a young Polish acrobat; her desperate desire to supplant Iris in her father's affections leads her to obtain Stashu's help in a plan for stealing the doll. The story is part *Lost Empires*-style vaudeville drama, with chatty backstage details and Mama Pelosi saving the show by filling the shoes of the injured headliner. It's also part film noir, with Martha starting to believe that Iris knows her thoughts and can speak even without the ventriloquist's guidance; the story's end, in fact, depicts Martha's losing touch with reality and trying to be Iris. The "this is all a play" epilogue undercuts the chill of that finish by suggesting that Martha found what she needed from Mama Pelosi and grew up happy while her father faded with vaudeville; unfortunately, the postscript is too vague to reassure worried readers but sufficiently equivocal to undercut the psychological drama. The intensity of Martha's loneliness and displacement, however, makes for an absorbing read. Since Martha's father really does prefer Iris to Martha, there's a toughness to Slepian's treatment of the situation ("The doll was funny and clever and pretty and Martha was not") that offers an intriguing contrast to reassuring books about wrongheaded childish fears. The language stays pretty simple, the friendship of Martha and Stashu adds some gentler touches that keep the book from becoming too dark, and the unusual combination of grit and stagecraft will pull readers looking for an alternative to blander middle-grades fare. DS

STEIG, WILLIAM *Grown-Ups Get to Do All the Driving*; written and illus. by William Steig. Di Capua/HarperCollins, 1995 48p

Library ed. ISBN 0-06-205081-8 \$14.89

Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-205080-X \$14.95

Ad 5-8 yrs

It's a funny title, and there's an equally funny cover illustration of a small and disgruntled boy strapped into the passenger seat while his elder smugly takes the wheel, but the humor in this picture book about the foibles of grownups is a little, well, grownup. There's no plot, nor any real progression in this lengthy litany of observations *cum* complaints, from "Grown-ups want children to be happy" to "Grown-ups make you go to the dentist" to "Grown-ups are always weighing themselves." While kids may enjoy the subversive point of view ("Grown-ups are mean") and the pictures of adults making fools of themselves, the book assumes a certain knowingness on the part of its audience that will be alien to most children who, despite their cavils, *want* to do all the driving, want to be grownups. The illustrations are often classic portraits of lumpy, slovenly adults amusing themselves at the expense of sturdy, sensible children; unfortunately, the book seems to be doing the same thing. This is less an album of snapshots of how children see us than it is one of us looking at ourselves. RS

STEWART, SARAH *The Library*; illus. by David Small. Farrar, 1995 34p

ISBN 0-374-34388-8 \$15.00

Ad 4-6 yrs

Librarians, probably, will be the real audience for this story-in-verse about reader and book collector Elizabeth Brown, who displayed her obsession from an early age: "She didn't like to play with dolls,/ She didn't like to skate./ She learned to read quite early/ And at an incredible rate." The books pile up as the years go by and Elizabeth is left with no other choice but to sign over her house and all its contents to the town, which promptly turns the whole shebang into the "Elizabeth Brown Free Library." It's a wish-fulfilling story about every librarian's collection-development dream, and after freeing herself from her books, Elizabeth and her—

what else?—cat move in with a similarly inclined lady, and the two get library cards and read to a ripe old age. Both the rhyme and the line-and-watercolor pictures are elegant and witty but a little sedate. While self-styled “information specialists” probably won’t appreciate this take on our image, those of us who *enjoy* being bookish old maids will get a kick out of it. RS

THOMASSIE, TYNIA *Feliciana Feydra LeRoux: A Cajun Tall Tale*; illus. by Cat Bowman Smith. Little, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-316-84125-0 \$14.95

R 5-8 yrs

Feliciana Feydra is her Grampa Baby’s favorite grandchild; he indulges her (“He jellied her toast with blackberry preserves to the very edges of the bread”) and she’s his shadow (“Wherever Grampa Baby was, Feliciana Feydra was a heel behind”). When it comes to alligator hunting, though, he’ll only take her six older brothers no matter how much she begs to come along. One year, however, F. F. heads out to the bayou by her lonesome and meets up with a hungry ’gator just as Grampa Baby and her brothers show up; turns out that our heroine’s too clever to be reptile food, and she saves herself and the boys, as well as bringing home enough alligator tail for a feast. This is more reality-based than Isaac’s *Swamp Angel*—the tale is outrageous rather than impossible—and it has a high-spirited flair all its own. Thomassie includes a Cajun glossary (and a “Recipe for a Cajun Accent” on the back cover) for those uneasy in the bayous, but the vocabulary is pretty clear in context, and her lilting text begs to be read aloud (“Feliciana Feydra was Grampa Baby’s teetsie-walla. Hoooo, he spoiled her rotten!”). Smith’s watercolors rely on deep hues, particularly of greens and reds, but the effect is intense rather than somber; Feliciana Feydra’s gap-toothed visage and perkily restless habits (she’s hanging upside down in places, sauntering Huck-Finnishly in a straw hat in others, and bouncing with enough vigor to lift her pigtails to the horizontal just about constantly) make her an endearing protagonist. Despite the ending (“Y’all pass a good time tonight, too, ya hear?”), this ain’t no bedtime story—crack this one open, think of crawfish, and *laissez le bon temps rouler*. DS

VAUGHAN, MARCIA *Whistling Dixie*; illus. by Barry Moser. HarperCollins, 1995 32p

Library ed. ISBN 0-06-021029-X \$14.89

Trade ed. ISBN 0-06-021030-3 \$15.00

R 4-8 yrs

With Dixie Lee, it’s just one new critter after another; she serenely displays her ’gator and snake and owl with an “I ’spect I’ll keep it for a pet,” and Mama responds with a predictable “Mercy me.” The glib gal gets her way by convincing Mama that her menagerie, strategically housed in the well, the gomper (false teeth) jar, and the chimney, will ward off slimy churn turners, bogeymen, and the dreaded Mist Sisters. Of course she’s right, and after Grandpappy suffers some misadventures with the beasties, the family enjoys “enough good luck to last a lifetime.” Vaughan delivers a text that is as much fun for the reader as for the audience, offering plenty of opportunity to ham up the comedy (“Cross my heart and hope to sit on a splinter”) and the mystery (“Slithering and squirming, slinking and sliding, they headed straight for the well . . .”). Moser’s paintings, which feature the intense clarity and severe bordering of old-fashioned snapshots, are witty, moody, and eerie in turn; subtle watercolor renderings of swamp vegetation form a background for the text. A good read in any season, this is one to keep in mind for a Halloween treat. EB

VIGNA, JUDITH *My Two Uncles*; written and illus. by Judith Vigna. Whitman, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8075-5507-X \$14.95 R 5-8 yrs

Elly is excited about the diorama she and her uncle Ned are secretly making as a surprise for her grandparents' fiftieth wedding anniversary party, so she's upset when it turns out that Uncle Ned won't be coming. Grampy refuses to meet Uncle Ned's lover, whom Elly calls Uncle Phil, and Ned says he won't come to the party unless Phil is welcome too. Unlike Michael Willhoite's now-notorious *Daddy's Roommate* (BCCB 3/91), this picture book on a similar theme has a plot and real characters and is clear and on target for this age group in its definition of *gay*: "Sometimes a man loves another man in the way a married couple love each other," says Daddy. He goes on to define *lesbian* and explain that some people—like Grampy—feel uncomfortable around gays and lesbians or believe that being gay is wrong. It's a short lecture and otherwise Vigna lets the messages spell themselves out through the story, which ends realistically (Ned drops off the present but does not come to the party) yet hopefully (Grampy drives Gran over to Ned and Phil's apartment so she can thank them for the diorama and gives the two men a friendly wave through the window). It's good to have a picture book about a gay uncle who does *not* have AIDS (see Jordan's *Losing Uncle Tim*, BCCB 11/89, Patricia Quinlan's *Tiger Flowers*, 7/94, and Lesléa Newman's book reviewed above) and Vigna's watercolor illustrations have a simplicity and light line that keep the proceedings from becoming too soap opera-ish. RS

WALLACE-BRODEUR, RUTH *Goodbye, Mitch*; illus. by Kathryn Mitter. Whitman, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8075-2996-6 \$13.95 R 4-8 yrs

Michael, who looks from the pictures to be about eight years old, tells of his beloved cat's last few weeks, beginning with Mitch's refusal to eat his favorite foods. Michael has never known a time when Mitch wasn't around: "He slept on my bed every night. Mitch and I even had the same color hair. The color of marmalade, Mom says, though Mitch's was striped." When the mother takes Mitch to the vet, the news is bad; Mitch probably has a tumor, and surgery "wouldn't help for long, and it would be painful." The family decides to let Mitch be, and two weeks later, the cat dies in Michael's arms. The cat's gradual weakening and final days are realistically and tenderly depicted, as is the child's reaction to it all. Soft greens predominate in Mitter's watercolor-and-colored-pencil art, balancing the orange hair of cat and boy. The drawings are stiff and overliteral, but they're sweet without being saccharine, and they capture the loving relationship between the boy and cat. SDL

WARNER, SALLY *Dog Years*; written and illus. by Sally Warner. Knopf, 1995 151p
ISBN 0-679-87147-0 \$13.00 R Gr. 4-7

With his father in prison for robbery, sixth-grader Case feels like he is trapped in a dog year, where one year seems like seven: his father calls periodically to criticize Case's friends and interests, he has no privacy in the apartment he shares with his mom and six-year-old sister, and so far at his new school he has made only one friend, the slightly weird Ned. However, when his English class starts a newspaper, he takes his insight about dog years and turns it into a cartoon starring Spotty

the dog, which addresses many of the anxiety-provoking problems middle-schoolers face: "Spotty sez: 1. Keep all leftover food in your locker. 2. Never wash your GYM clothes. 3. Especially the sox. Then U will always know your locker." Popular Tyler, whose father is a successful businessman, concocts a plan to sell the cartoon, and Case must wrestle with his growing awareness that Tyler is cheating and using him, while Case has been cheating Ned of the credit he deserves for lettering the cartoons. Though the book will be read and enjoyed by some readers as a breezy story of a boy coming through a tough patch in his life, more discerning readers will pick up on the subtle way Warner reveals the choices her characters have made about the ways they live. Because Warner writes with such a light touch, she is able to deal with complex and difficult ethical issues without ever seeming depressing or moralistic, and she sketches her vivid characters with a remarkable economy of words, keeping the text short. The large print, Case's funny cartoons, and Spotty's appearance at the beginning of each chapter help make this a particularly appealing book for children going through dog years of their own. **SDL**

WILLIAMS, MARCIA, ad. *The Adventures of Robin Hood*; ad. and illus. by Marcia Williams. Candlewick, 1995 26p
ISBN 1-56402-535-7 \$17.95 R Gr. 2-6

Williams, who very successfully adapted Greek myths into near-comic-strip panel narratives (BCCB 11/92), here gives the Robin Hood legend the same treatment. It's rather a daring move, because kids tend to hold Robin Hood dearer than they do Perseus, but the breezy approach keeps up the pace without cheapening the romantic hero. Most episodes ("Robin of Locksley Becomes an Outlaw," "Robin Gets a Ducking," "Marian Arrives in Sherwood") fit into a single oversized double spread, while the text tells the story straight. Williams' energetic line-and-watercolor illustrations have an appealing slyness to them, including entertaining details such as Robin's peculiar dog, and a multitude of sassy speech balloons offer often-sarcastic banter so there's as much wordplay as swordplay. The format softens the impact of some of the direr deeds of the sheriff and others, so that kids can shed a tear or two over Robin's death without having nightmares about it. Although she's included most of the classic Robin Hood stories, Williams hasn't mentioned her sources; it's a pity she didn't append a reading list either, because this will whet kids' appetites for more. **DS**

WILLIS, PATRICIA *Out of the Storm*. Clarion, 1995 [160p]
ISBN 0-395-68708-X \$14.95
Reviewed from galleys Ad Gr. 4-6

World War II is over, but Mandy's father will never come home as he promised. Mandy, her brother, and her mother must come to terms with his death and with the struggle to survive without him—financially as well as emotionally. Their visit to a relative's sheep farm turns into a permanent move when Mandy's mother gets a chance to manage and then buy the local general store. Mandy's responsibility for the sheep, which she at first resents, ultimately allows her to accept the change in their lives. The writing here is sometimes labored ("A wail threatened to come screeching out of Mandy's throat, but she fought it down") and repetitive in emphasizing Mandy's determination to return to their previous hometown, but the family dynamics and sense of loss are credibly developed. The anger Mandy's

mother feels about her husband's death is especially realistic, as is the hope nurtured by Mandy's brother that somehow his father will return. A climactic storm, while predictable, is dramatic and authentically detailed. Many scenes will linger in reader's minds, not the least of which is Mandy's comprehension of a classmate's problematic home life and her own insight into stern Aunt Bess' integrity as a sheep farmer. In fact, it is the characters' intense relationships that give immediacy to the historical setting. BH

WILSON, GINA *Prowlpuss*; illus. by David Parkins. Candlewick, 1995 26p
ISBN 1-56402-483-0 \$15.95 Ad 4-7 yrs

Even one-eyed, one-eared cats need love, and Prowlpuss is combing the night alleys in search of his heart's desire, the elusive "tiny-white-star cat." Spurned by the flirty feline who won't come down from the tree for him, Prowlpuss heads back at dawn to the apartment of plump, plain Nellie Smith, who embraces her errant pet, gushing, "That's my jowly Prowly! My sweet Prowly-wowly!" If the moniker Prowlpuss has a suspiciously familiar ring, it's because Wilson owes a sizeable debt to T. S. Eliot's practical cats. At her best she shares a playful delight in cat naming—"He's not a sit-on-the-mat-and-lick-yourself-down cat./ He's an out-on-the-town cat,/ A racer, a chaser,/ a 'You're a disgrace'-er"—but then breaks her cadence with an unsubtle "AHA!" or "No, he's not!" While this story in rhyme could please a group, many of Parkins's enticingly shadowy watercolors are simply too dark to be seen past the knee-huggers in the first row, and while the golden, grainy Prowlpuss is a satisfyingly piratical ruffian, his love interest is too stiffly rendered to be a convincing siren. Still, the nocturnal adventure of this street-tough tom may offer a refreshing counterpoint to fluffy kitten tales. EB

WRIGHT, COURTNI C. *Wagon Train: A Family Goes West in 1865*; illus. by Gershom Griffith. Holiday House, 1995 32p
ISBN 0-8234-1152-4 \$15.95 M 5-8 yrs

At the close of the Civil War, a family of ex-slaves purchases a wagon with the money they had been saving to buy their freedom and bands together with others from a neighboring plantation to form a train bound for California. Ginny, a daughter of indeterminate age, narrates their adventures, if adventures they can be called. Except for a frightening episode in which Pa suffers a rattlesnake bite, and another involving a benign encounter with an Indian scout, nothing very exciting happens, and even the physical rigors of the journey are prosaically described. Griffith's watercolors do not supply the missing drama; many are stiffly posed family scenes reminiscent of vacation snapshots. Ginny's textbook-perfect grammar when narrating ("Ma pounds the shirts, pants, and dresses on the stones to remove the dust and dirt of the trail") contrasts awkwardly with her and her family's speech ("Yes, chil'ren, that California all right. We done made it. We's home"). In all, the journey is related somewhat generically—and such questions as how they got from the Oregon Trail to California and why they encounter saguaro cactuses far north of their habitat are unanswered. Wright's audience will surely benefit from an important perspective often overlooked in accounts of the pioneers—that not all settlers looked like the Ingalls family. However, with this lesson learned, listeners can turn to more compelling accounts of westward migration. EB

WYNNE-JONES, TIM *Some of the Kinder Planets*. Kroupa/Orchard, 1995 130p
 Library ed. ISBN 0-531-08751-4 \$14.99
 Trade ed. ISBN 0-531-09451-0 \$14.95 R Gr. 4-7

Canadian Wynne-Jones, perhaps better known to U.S. audiences for his picture books (*Zoom Away*, etc.), appears here as a short-story writer. Nine stories tell of children encountering other worlds, whether celestial (as in "Night of the Pomegranates," where Harriet sees Mars through a telescope), literary (in "Tweedledum and Tweedledead" a boy's best friend gently blackmails him into reading *Alice in Wonderland*), or supernatural ("The Clearing" uses a Vanishing Hitchhiker motif to bring a lonely boy a friend for a time). The stories may not pack as much of a punch as young readers are accustomed to, but the language and themes are accessible to a younger short-story audience than usual. The writing is thoughtful, inventive, and often humorous; stories such as "Save the Moon for Kerdy Dickus," which tells how a hi-tech, new-agey family gets mistaken for extraterrestrials by a farm boy, would provide pleasingly offbeat readalouds. This would make a good middle-grades introduction to the short-story genre. DS

ZIEFERT, HARRIET *Oh, What a Noisy Farm!*; illus. by Emily Bolam. Tambourine, 1995 32p
 Library ed. ISBN 0-688-13261-8 \$14.93
 Trade ed. ISBN 0-688-13260-X \$15.00 R 2-5 yrs

When the bull starts chasing the cow, the farmer's wife hollers and runs after the bull, the farmer follows, banging on a pan, and several animals add on to the line in this cumulative tale: "With the farmer's wife shouting, the farmer CRASH BANGING, the goose HONK HONKING, the dog BOW WOWING, and the cat MEOWING—oh, what a noisy farm!" After the cow and the bull agree to be friends, everyone settles down for a nice nap. Small children, who are fond of chasing each other and shouting, will particularly enjoy this simple, happy story (adults, on the other hand, may enjoy a grownup giggle at the euphemistic "friendship"). With its bright colors against a white background, and its childlike strokes, this makes a visually appealing (and easily seen from a distance) book for toddler storytime. The large type, easy-to-predict text and short words make it a good choice for early readers as well. SDL



PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS: RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS

Bauer, Caroline Feller. *The Poetry Beak: An Annotated Anthology with Ideas for Introducing Children to Poetry*; illus. by Edith Ringham. Wilson, 1995. 347p. ISBN 0-8242-0852-8. \$45.00.

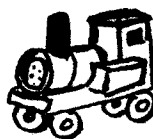
"Poetry breaks" are a sort of gentle guerilla poetry experience, where a volunteer, a parent, a teacher, a librarian, or whoever breaks into the normal order of things to share a poem. Bauer's book is a compact and complete do-it-yourself poetry-break packet, including ideas for presentation, settings, and general poetry activities; she includes a good 250 pages of poems, suggesting a poem-specific project or topic-extending book after most of the verses. A helpful bibliography includes adult books on kids and poetry as well as poetic anthologies, poetry books with pictures, poetry for young adults, and other useful categories; there is a general index to the book, as well as title, author, first line, and subject indices to the poems. DS

Cart, Michael. *What's So Funny?: Wit and Humor in American Children's Literature*. HarperCollins, 1995. [288p.] ISBN 0-06-024453-4. \$25.00. Reviewed from galleys.

In his introduction, Cart expresses his approbation for works that "shar[e] one's readerly enthusiasm for truly good books." This is essentially his accomplishment as he surveys the fond and the funny in children's books, focusing on the works of Hugh Lofting, Walter R. Brooks, Robert Lawson, Eleanor Estes, Arnold Lobel, Beverly Cleary, and others. The book is thoroughly footnoted, but the author is avowedly suspicious of the effects of academic scholarship upon humor; as a result, the book is less a study than an affectionate, detailed description of the major characteristics of—and characters in—American children's literary humor. DS

Konigsburg, E. L. *TalkTalk: A Children's Book Author Speaks to Grown-Ups*. Karl/Atheneum, 1995. [192p.] ISBN 0-689-31993-2. \$29.95. illus. with photographs. Reviewed from galleys.

Nine of Konigsburg's lectures and speeches, ranging from her Newbery Award acceptance speech in 1968 to her Anne Carroll Moore Memorial Lecture in 1992, are arranged chronologically here. The author demonstrates her characteristic wit and style both in the lectures themselves and in her newly written introductions; the subjects touched upon—multicultural literature, the importance of language, the genesis of her ideas—are familiar but always worth exploring, and adults looking for more insight into the author and into authorship for children will find this a particularly accessible text. DS



SUBJECT AND USE INDEX

Keyed to *The Bulletin's* alphabetical arrangement by author, this index, which appears in each issue, can be used in three ways. Entries in regular type refer to subjects; entries in bold type refer to curricular or other uses; entries in ALL-CAPS refer to genres and appeals. In the case of subject headings, the subhead "stories" refers to books for the readaloud audience; "fiction," to those books intended for independent reading.

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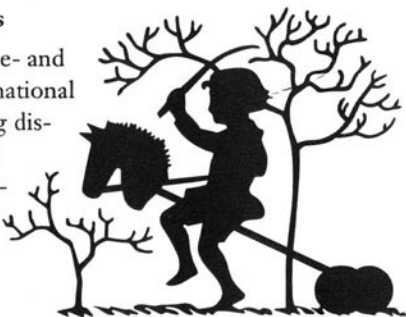
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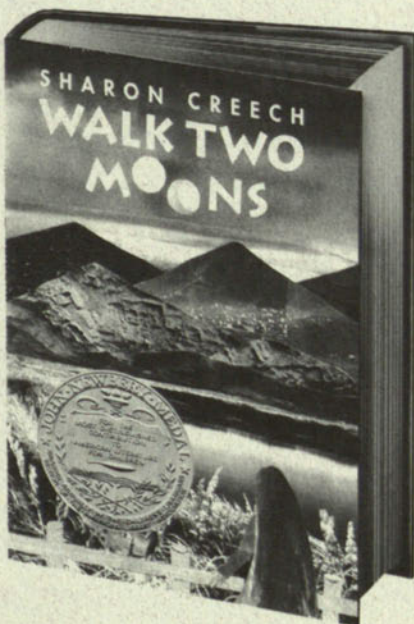
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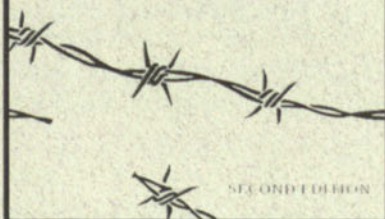
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